



**United States Department of Justice
United States Attorney's Office
District of Minnesota**

**B. Todd Jones,
United States Attorney**

**Jeanne F. Cooney
Director of Community Relations
(612) 664-5611
email: jeanne.cooney@usdoj.gov**

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, Dec. 17, 2009
WWW.USDOJ.GOV/USAO/MN

Another Operation Xcellerator defendant is sentenced

During a 21-month nationwide law enforcement investigation that ended in early 2009, 750 people were arrested on narcotics-related charges. The collaborative investigative effort, known as Operation Xcellerator, targeted the Sinaloa Cartel, a major Mexican drug-trafficking organization. Thirty-six of the individuals arrested during that operation were indicted in U.S. District Court in Minnesota.

Earlier today in St. Paul, U.S. District Court Judge Richard Kyle sentenced Eduardo Pieciado Solis, 31, Vadnais Heights, to 126 months in prison on one count of conspiracy to distribute in excess of 50 grams of methamphetamine. In his plea agreement, Solis admitted that between January 2005 and December 2008, he conspired with others to distribute between 150 and 500 grams of methamphetamine. Solis also admitted he was a manager or supervisor of at least five individuals in the organization.

Following today's sentencing, U.S. Attorney B. Todd Jones said, "The result in this case is a critical part of the national effort to combat these very destructive criminal cartels based in Mexico. Our partnership with state law enforcement and the Mexican government is key to the overall success of this effort."

According to documents on file with the court, the Sinaloa Cartel is responsible for bringing into the U.S. tons of illegal drugs from Mexico through a network of distribution cells in the U.S. and Canada. The Cartel also is believed to be responsible for laundering millions of dollars in criminal proceeds from drug trafficking activities.

Solis was involved in distribution cells that moved illegal drugs, primarily cocaine and methamphetamine, into Minnesota from Mexico and Canada. The drugs were transported by private automobiles, commercial buses, commercial airplanes, and private and commercial trucks. The Minnesota cells took in approximately \$3.5 million during each month of operation.

"Operation Xcellerator successfully targeted the Sinaloa cartel's drug distribution

throughout the United States, including its Minneapolis area operations,” said Stephen A. Luzinski, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration’s Chicago Field Division, which covers the state of Minnesota. “The investigation that led to Mr. Solis’s arrest and ultimate conviction for methamphetamine distribution is directly attributed to the tireless work and efforts of our agents and law enforcement partners.”

In addition to the arrests of 750 people nationwide, Operation Xcellerator resulted in the seizure of approximately \$59.1 million in U.S. currency as well as more than 12,000 kilograms of cocaine, 16,000 pounds of marijuana, 1,200 pounds of methamphetamine, eight kilograms of heroin, and approximately 1.3 million in ecstasy pills along with vehicles, aircraft, weapons, and maritime vessels, including a submarine.

Here in Minnesota the investigations collectively known as Operation Xcellerator were conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the St. Paul Police Department, the Minneapolis Police Department, the Ramsey County Sheriff’s Office, the Hennepin County Sheriff’s Office, the Sherburne County Sheriff’s Office, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, and the Northwest Metro Drug Task Force. The case against Solis was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Christian S. Wilton.